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Wilson

OREGON'S FARM LABOR MARKET

Prepared for

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON MIGRATORY LABOR

Portland, Oregon
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STATE OF OREGON

Douglas McKay
Governor

STATE UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION COMMISSION
OREGON STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
Affiliated With
UNITED STATES EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
Salem, Oregon

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and sugar beets occupy extra workers into October and even November, completing the farm labor year for the State.

Most of the late call for farm workers is met by single men and couples, as families generally retire from the labor market in September when schools start. Reports show that the greater part of the demand at all times is met by residents of immediate or nearby areas. Of approximately 58,000 seasonal workers during our early peak this summer, 14,500 were out-of-State migrants. By fall 9,900 of these workers from other states were counted, while only 7,000 were busy between peaks. In some areas the number was greater than in recent seasons while in others fewer were noted.

Oregon has been fortunate in that from 60 to 80 per cent of the seasonal farm labor usually is available from nearby areas, but thousands of migratory workers are needed, and steps should be taken to provide them with continuous work throughout the summer, filling in several weeks between peaks. As the State's industries develop, causing additional increase in population, an even greater proportion of the extra harvest help may be available from cities near most of the highly developed agricultural areas. Peak industrial demands, however, as during the summer just passing, can hinder farm recruitment because of the more attractive wages and working conditions offered by trade and industry.

A survey covering 6,378 migrant workers who made inquiries at Oregon's farm labor information stations last year showed that 45 per cent had their last job in Oregon, 25 per cent in California, 13 per cent in Washington, and the remainder scattered over 36 other mountain, mid-western, and even eastern states. A majority of these migrants were families traveling in their own automobiles.

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NUMBER OF HIRED SEASONAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

DIVISION OF
RESEARCH AND STATISTICS

BY TYPE OF WORKER, 1950

CROP ACTIVITY

TOTAL
LOCAL
OUT-OF-AREA
OUT-OF-STATE

CROP ACTIVITY	MAY		JUNE		JULY		AUGUST		SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER ^o	
	1ST HALF	2ND HALF	1ST HALF	2ND HALF	1ST HALF	2ND HALF	1ST HALF	2ND HALF	1ST HALF	2ND HALF	1ST HALF	2ND HALF
TOTAL	10,575	11,650	33,945	58,155	41,325	43,755	37,480	56,225	49,380	27,720	23,000	19,500
LOCAL	6,625	7,740	23,750	33,980	24,838	31,730	26,955	41,100	37,965	19,370	16,000	14,000
OUT-OF-AREA	500	590	3,905	9,675	7,775	4,900	3,550	5,200	4,565	4,980	4,000	3,000
OUT-OF-STATE	3,450	3,320	6,290	14,500	8,712	7,125	6,975	9,925	6,850	3,370	3,000	2,500

^o ESTIMATED